

Chief Executive Officer IntermediaryEd

THE SEARCH

IntermediaryEd, an emerging philanthropic organization, seeks a visionary leader to serve as its first chief executive officer (CEO). This entrepreneurial leader will work closely with the organization's esteemed board of directors to solidify IntermediaryEd's new mission and determine its vision and strategy for impact through improved college and career pathways. This position provides a unique opportunity to develop a start-up organization at a time when the gaps across education and workplace ecosystems are becoming more evident and demand a relentless focus on solutions that yield social impact.

The nascent organization is uniquely poised to serve as a leader in education and workplace success in the next decade and beyond. It will support innovative solutions to existing and emerging challenges to meaningful pathways to post-secondary training and education that lead to productive employment. Working closely with a highly committed and experienced board of directors to steward its \$400 million endowment, the CEO will build the foundation for the organization, hire and grow a team, and establish IntermediaryEd as a national influencer and convener on topics related to its core mission. The CEO will bring a track record of growing high-performing enterprises, as well as a record of sophisticated executive leadership including direct involvement with boards, expertise in responsible business practices, and experience in the successful recruitment and cultivation of talent.

Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm with expertise in higher education, K-12 education, and public policy, has been retained to assist in the recruitment of the chief executive officer. All applications, inquiries, and nominations, which will remain highly confidential, should be directed to Isaacson, Miller as indicated at the end of this document.

ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION

History and Context

IntermediaryEd, formerly ACT, Inc.¹, is the result of the 2024 sale of ACT, Inc.'s assets, which supported the creation of assessments, research, and work-ready credentials in education and the workplace. Proceeds from the transaction enabled a new nonprofit organization—currently called IntermediaryEd—to continue ACT Inc.'s mission focused on education and workplace success, while ACT Education Corporation's business now operates separately as a public benefit limited liability company. Operating independent of ACT Education Corp., IntermediaryEd is committed to being a leader in systemic reform that enhances and strengthens the linkages between career aspirations and explorations, and employability.

¹ ACT, Inc.'s assets included in the sale also encompassed its wholly owned subsidiary Encoura, which provides custom technology solutions that combine research, data science, strategic enrollment services, and multichannel marketing, serving over 2,000 higher ed institutions.

The organization currently exists as a 501(c)(3) charitable organization and employs a small staff of four to support the day-to-day operations. IntermediaryEd retains a financial investment in both ACT and Encoura, has direct representation on ACT's and Encoura's boards of directors.

Mission

The Board has identified the following working mission statement to guide the early years of the organization:

IntermediaryEd bridges the gaps in the education and workforce ecosystem that will lead to greater learner empowerment and systemic improvements.

The mission is rooted in the fact that the world of work is rapidly changing. The U.S. is facing a projected deficit of over 6.5 million highly skilled workers by 2030. IntermediaryEd recognizes an immense opportunity to close this gap while creating bright futures for students and young adults. With the rising demand for post-high school credentials in high-paying career fields, it is more important than ever for young people to develop skills that will open doors for them to succeed and access opportunities to engage in a career that is rewarding. One essential question that undergirds IntermediaryEd's mission is: What will it take to ensure youth and young adults are adequately prepared to be successful in productive employment? The organization will likely focus on four different stages of the career learning path: Career Awareness, Career Exploration, Career Preparation, and Career Advancement.

The Board expects the new CEO to be committed to the idea that every learner must be supported in their quest to navigate and connect their aspirations into meaningful career explorations and skill development to successfully navigate life's challenges and engage in a productive and relevant career. The CEO is expected to bring working knowledge of the education and/or workforce ecosystem to IntermediaryEd to develop key strategies in the four primary areas above in service to the organization's mission.

LEADERSHIP

Board of Directors

IntermediaryEd's nine-member Board of Directors brings broad, diverse backgrounds and perspectives on education and workforce issues. These perspectives will play a vital role in shaping the organization's future strategy and ensuring the best path for long-term impact and success. The board is responsible for the governance of IntermediaryEd, will provide general direction and guidance to the management team, and will play a key role in developing the organization's mission and vision.

The board represents respected leaders from across the P-16 landscape, including secondary education, post-secondary education, and educational nonprofits. You may view the full membership of the board [here](#).

ROLE OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Reporting to the Board of Directors of IntermediaryEd, the CEO will bring a strong drive to build a new organization from the ground up by establishing strategic priorities, hiring and growing its staff, managing and growing its budget, and performing a wide range of operational functions including strategic planning, program development, brand building, and developing meaningful partnerships to further the organization's mission.

The founding board members have spent the past several months preparing for the arrival of the organization's first CEO to fully and publicly launch IntermediaryEd. The CEO will embrace key opportunities and challenges, some outlined as follows:

KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE CEO

Collaborate with IntermediaryEd's board of directors to refine the strategic vision and mission of the organization

Serving as a consultative partner to the board, the chief executive officer will help refine both the mission and vision of IntermediaryEd and use these guiding principles to set and deliver on strategic priorities for the organization. The CEO will help answer critical questions about the organization and develop a cohesive strategy to lead it through its early years while remaining nimble and open to responding to new developments that impact organizational strategy.

The CEO will appropriately engage the board, support board operations and governance, and maintain partnerships with board members. Additionally, the CEO will work in concert with the board's committees to ensure alignment with the organization's mission and goals.

Hire and develop a talented staff

The CEO will help to manage the creation of an organization, hire key staff, and establish a high-impact culture of collaboration with strong dedication to the mission of the organization. The CEO must remain attuned to the benefits and challenges of a remote/hybrid environment, working thoughtfully to build community internally and offering meaningful opportunities for professional learning and growth to all staff.

Build the reputation and awareness of IntermediaryEd

The CEO will serve as a dynamic spokesperson in advocating for and advancing the mission of IntermediaryEd. In building out the organization, the CEO will ensure it serves as a convener and thought leader in spaces related to its mission while building strong relationships with key stakeholders in the education and business sectors. Through a variety of actions and partnerships, the CEO must position IntermediaryEd to inform and influence a robust infrastructure for learners to navigate and connect their aspirations into meaningful and productive employment.

Create an operational infrastructure and steward finances for the organization

The CEO will lead the day-to-day operations of IntermediaryEd and oversee the long-term financial sustainability of the organization. To this end, the CEO will develop an organizational budget and oversee its finances and investments. The CEO will seek and nurture partnerships to further the organization's mission while utilizing effective business practices that demonstrate efficiency and effectiveness.

QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

The successful candidate will bring executive experience in education and/or business fields that may incorporate K-12, higher education (two- and four-year institutions), workforce development, foundations, and start-up organizations. Additionally, the successful candidate will possess many of the following professional experiences and personal characteristics:

- A demonstrated record of visionary leadership and experience building an organization, exercising accountability, and pivoting when necessary to meet the mission
- A record of managerial success leading people and projects
- Highly effective communication skills with a strong external presence and ability to generate excitement around the mission of the organization and serve as an influential leader in the field
- The capacity to steward finances of an organization and utilize effective business practices
- Experience working with and leveraging an engaged board of directors
- Demonstrated success in the architecture and execution of a strategic plan built on the mission as its foundation
- Experience engaging within and across high profile networks
- An understanding of the critical intersection of education and workforce development and an ability to see these two fields as necessary partners
- A willingness to take risks
- Significant entrepreneurship and/or business experience

LOCATION

The CEO and board will organize IntermediaryEd as a hybrid workplace, collaborating to determine the location of the office in a major metropolitan area that meets conditions established by the board. Though the CEO and staff need not live in the selected city, the IntermediaryEd team will convene in the office on a regular cadence.

APPLICATIONS, INQUIRIES, AND NOMINATIONS

Screening of complete applications will begin immediately and continue until the completion of the search process. Inquiries, nominations, referrals, and resumes with cover letters should be sent electronically via the Isaacson, Miller website: <https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/intermediaryed/chief-executive-officer>.

Jeff Kessner, Ericka Miller, Diana Carmona, Jenny Rubin
Isaacson, Miller